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*Leo M. Frank Tells His Own Story to
The Journal*

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**MAN SENTENCED TO
DIE**

**FOR KILLING
PHAGAN GIRL**

**TALKS FOR FIRST
TIME**

In Lengthy Interview With Newspaper Reporters in
His Cell

at Tower Condemned Prisoner Vehemently
Asserts He is In-

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and Ex-

presses Belief That Justice Will yet Be Done

PERSON WHO WROTE THE NOTES FOUND NEAR

BODY OF VICTIM IS GUILTY, HE DECLARES

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Collusion Between the Solicitor General Who
Prosecuted Him

and the Attorney Who Represented the Negro,
Jim Conley,

Convicted as an Accessory to the Killing Is
Charged-Hopes

Detective Burns Will Expose the Guilty

"I say to you the murderer of Mary Phagan was the writer of the notes found near her dead body."

"If they had found Conley's knife by the body," demanded Leo M. Frank Friday afternoon, in his first verbal statement to reporters since his conviction—"if they had found that, would they say I did the murder?"

"If they had found Conley's pistol, would they have said I did it?"

"If they had found a piece of his clothing gripped in her fingers, would they have said I did it?"

He leaned forward in the chair which bears the mark of the prison as much as the bars themselves—leaned forward with his hands on the iron bars, pressed against the iron until his nails turned blue.

He breathed quickly, opened and shut his lips in a stress of emotion, and looked with eager, demanding expression into the eyes of his hearers.

Through the prison rang the sound of an iron door opening and shutting—the clang of iron against iron made a strident noise that seemed to penetrate to every nook of the jail.

Frank sat forward in his chair, his hands on the bars of his cell door. For a moment he remained speechless, motionless,

staring at the two men to whom he was repeating his innocence—through whom he made his appeal to the people.

“The knife, the pistol, the clothing—that would have been evidence enough wouldn’t it.” He paused over this question.

NOTES HOLD CLUE.

“But—listen to me—there was even greater evidence. If everyone could only see those quotes—If everyone could only see those notes—if they could but read them and study them. Why, men, there’s the evidence—there’s the means of convicting Mary Phagan’s murderer.”

“If the newspapers want to do me a service let them print those notes again. That would be doing me service, great service. If people want to know who did the murder, let them study those notes. There’s the secret of the murder. There’s the solution.”

“Whoever wrote those notes killed Mary Phagan. Oh—you can’t get around that. It’s the truth, the all-prevailing truth, the truth that will out and won’t down.”

He pressed his hands against the bars of his cell and shifted his body in the nervous, impatient way of one who tries with difficulty to explain to others what is clear to him.

“Don’t you see it that way? Don’t you?”

Frank turned from one to another of the two journal reporters to whom he spoke.

They sat outside his cell and talked with him through the bars of his door. Behind burned an electric light over a table on which were piled books and papers, evidence of how he has spent the hours of his imprisonment.

Not since his conviction and return to jail have newspaper men seen him. Expressions from Frank have been written statements made through attorneys.

But Friday the doors of the tower were open to newspaper men and they were invited to talk with Frank, to ask him whatever questions they wished and he was ready to answer.

"How about Conley?" He put the question slowly.

"Is he talking?" Frank added this query in a sharp quick tone.

"Does he say to the newspapers: 'I'm ready to answer your questions. I've got nothing to conceal?' He says nothing, he sees no one, he's keeping a silent tongue. Why?"

"I'm here telling you all I know. But

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LEO FRNAK TALKS FREELY TO REPORTERS

SEES NEWSPAPER MEN

FOR FIRST TIME IN JAIL

“The Murderer of Mary
Pha-

gan Was Man Who
Wrote

Notes,” He Says

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what about Conley—the man they convicted me with. He’s got nothing to say to anybody.

“If he’s told the truth it seems to me it ought to be shouted from the house tops; it seems to me he ought to be willing to talk to anybody, to answer any questions.”

“Just take his statements, pick them to pieces, and see what you think. Does anybody believe his stories, all of his stories?”

CHARGES CONLEY LIED.

“How did Mary Phagan’s face get grimed with dirt and her body make a track along the floor of the cellar? Conley says he picked her up and carried her. The physical facts of the case show her body was dragged. Didn’t he lie there?”

“On May 18 he makes a statement giving a picturesque detail of himself on the day of the murder. He bought whisky here and there; he went to this place and that; he met a man, round whose neck was wrapped a whip, and bought whisky from him.”

“Don’t you know he made up that story? Don’t you?” He turned to one of his hearers. “Don’t you, man?” turning to the other.

He slapped his hands together, leaned back in his chair, then leaned forward and gripped the iron bars of his cell.

“How can you believe what he said then or what he said afterward?”

He paused as though with a new thought.

“I’m not southern born, but I’m a southerner by adoption. In this instance can you take the negro’s word against the white man—not disbelieve him because he’s a negro. I don’t mean that. But because he’s proved a negro who has lied at every point.”

“My life’s an open book. I mean that in a real sense. And his—what did the detectives find when they began to inquire of Conley’s doings? Chain-gang sentences, bad character, a negro of the type. Isn’t that true?”

“So, I say it surprises me that this negro’s word prevails against a white man’s.”

DISCUSSES CONLEY’S CASE.

“Now let’s see about Conley’s other statements.”

Frank leaned back in his chair and lighted the cigar between his teeth with a small electric lighter from his vest pocket.

The nervous emphasis died from his tones, and his expression became cool, like that of a student considering a problem.

Since his trial he has gained fifteen pounds and looks younger. At the outset of his interview, he asked his visitors to have seats.

"Sit down, sit down," he said to one. "I'm glad to meet you."

As he talked he sometimes smiled, but his manner for the most part was either emphatic or imploring as he strove with each word to enforce his statement that he is innocent, and that the murderer is the man who wrote the notes found beside Mary Phagan's body.

Now for the moment he was cool and critical.

"You know on May 24 Conley made another statement that he wrote these notes at my dictation. I merely ask you to read the notes, study them, and then see what you think. They are answer enough in themselves. They point the guilt, but they don't point it toward me."

"Then on May 28 Conley made another statement. This time he was going to tell the whole truth—everything, and he forgot to say how the body was disposed of. He was going to tell the whole truth, and didn't mention detail of greatest importance."

"If he had been telling real facts, picturing something in the way it certainly happened would he have forgotten? I—"

He stopped short in a nervous abrupt way. Sat with his lips tightly shut, his head half turned, then looked quickly at his hearers.

“There are more suspicious facts point to the negro in a minute than the prosecution has ever directed toward me.”

“I have never changed my statement, because I have told the truth and the truth cannot be changed.”

NEGRO ADMITTED LYING.

“The negro first said he wrote those notes on Friday. Then, he admitted that: “I lied about that, boss. Then, he said the writing was done on Saturday.”

“Detectives told him in the beginning that his first stories wouldn’t do. You’ll have to give something better than that, they said. And the negro, knowing it was life and death with him, gave the best imagination could suggest.”

“My conviction was based on error that I hope was unwitting. But sometimes I doubt it. Subornation of perjury, holding back evidence—all these things were used against me. The office of the solicitor is to find the truth, not to offer up the most convenient victim.”

“The law is man-made; justice is infallible. The courts try to approximate justice with law, but in my case they have missed their aim by a mile.”

“The supreme court, in passing on my appeal, considered only the legal points, as was quite proper. It isn’t the duty of this court to go into facts—to consider guilt or innocence, and the

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<p>PHAGAN MURDER NOTES</p>

REPRINTED

AT REQUEST OF CONDEMNED MAN

WRITTEN BY CONLEY FROM MEMORY

NOTE FOUND NEAR BODY

question of my guilt wasn't before that court at all."

COLLUSION IS CHARGED.

Reverting to Conley's trial, Frank said:

"It is very patent and obvious that there was collusion in that trial between the solicitor general and Conley's attorney. A blind man could see that. There would be something to wonder about if reasonable people didn't see through it. I wonder if any immunity has been promised. I don't want to judge. This suggests itself to my mind from what I have read in the papers. That is all I know about it."

Speaking of the notes found by Mary Phagan's body, he said:

"Show me one case on record where a white man dictated notes like those to a negro. Why, the detections got the information from me that Conley could write. Suppose I dictated the notes, as Conley said. Is it reasonable to believe that I would have furnished this information that he could write?"

There is a great deal in the case that is mysterious, he said.

"I understand that Burns, the detective, has been employed. Mayhap Burns will make them sit up and take notice. It is there, if he finds it. They say he is a great detective. I haven't hired him.

My lawyers haven't hired him. I understand he is writing some sort of a book and has become interested in this case. Mayhap Burns will clear up this entire matter."

The remark was made that a good many people are not satisfied with the solution that has been offered of the case.

"There are lots of people who are not satisfied," Frank agreed. "I, of course am not satisfied. I am innocent."

He offered some cigarettes to the newspaper men through the bars of his cell.

"Though we are at the bar, I haven't anything spirituous to offer you," said he.

He was asked what time he thought Mary Phagan was killed.

"I haven't any way of knowing what," he said. "I don't think anybody knows it except the person who killed her."

"What do you think of Dr. Harris?" he was asked, Dr. Harris being the state's witness whose testimony fixed in the jurors' minds that Mary Phagan had died within a certain time after she ate her last meal."

"I don't care to comment on Dr. Harris," he answered. "It is not for me to pass judgement, as I have said several times during this interview."

He was asked what he thought of Dr. Harris' opinion that the hair on the lathe was not Mary Phagan's.

LETS PEOPLE JUDGE.

"It is not for me to pass judgement on that," he answered. "I will let the people of this community judge if it was proper for the state's officials to conceal evidence which would have eliminated

me from any connection with this crime. I will let the people of this community judge if it was fair for the state's official simply to be hunting for a victim and to allow suppression of the truth. Certainly, it is not up to the state's official to break the neck of an innocent man to gratify his own political and personal ambitions. It is not manly. It is not just."

"I have acted as a man throughout this thing. I have stood jam up to the issue. I have stood jam up to the issue. I haven't dodged at all. I have answered all the questions asked me."

Regarding the story from New York about the Formby woman saying detectives made her drunk to get an affidavit from her against Frank, he exclaimed:

"Isn't that awful! I feel like Cicero when he said 'O tempora, O mores!'"

The prisoner waved his hands impatiently and said:

"Gentlemen, I don't ask for sympathy. I don't need sympathy. I do

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GIVE US MEN

(POEM READ BY FRANK TO NEWSPAPER REPORTERS.)

During his conversation with the newspaper men Thursday Leo M. Frank, while discussing the attitude and obligation resting upon men, asked permission to read Oliver Wendell Holmes' poem entitled "Give Us

Men.”

“You need not publish it,” said Frank, “but it will give you an insight into what I mean when I say that all I wanted was manly treatment from manly men. This is not a verse from the Bible, but nevertheless, I am inclined to believe its author was inspired when we wrote it. It fits so well in with the thought now in my mind.”

Then he read from a little booklet which he picked up from a table:

God, give us men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and
ready hands;

Men whom the lust of lucre does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office can not buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;

Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without
winking,

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the
fog,

In public duty and in private thinking.

* * * * * Lo! Freedom weeps;

Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice
sleeps.

--OLIVER WENDELL

HOLMES.

need a square deal, and I haven't had it yet. But I believe the people of Georgia yet will see to it that I am given one. I never saw this Formby woman and wouldn't know her if I were to see her now. The story she has given out today, though, shows the methods used to create prejudice against me in the public mind."

Asked about Albert McKnight's statements, one for the prosecution and the other for the defense, he said:

"I don't know him, either. He said he was at my home on that day. But you can take it from me he was not—not while I was there."

"You know what I said in my statement the other day about truth being on the march? Well, it was a rather singular coincidence that a day or two later The Atlanta Journal developed from Dr. Harris that the hair found on the lathe handle on the second floor of the pencil factory was not that of Mary Phagan."

"When I expressed confidence that the truth would come out I knew nothing of this. This is the beginning; the truth and the full truth will be known sooner or later. I don't make this plea from my own individuality; my individuality sinks out of consideration. My life is but a bubble. They can easily take it. What I plead for is truth, and justice. God almighty will see to it that the truth eventually prevails."

TO BE SENTENCED.

Frank will probably be arraigned in the criminal division of the superior court the first part of next week and a new date for his execution set by Judge Ben H. Hill.

While his attorneys, Luther Z. Rosser and Reuben R. Arnold, are certain to make an extraordinary motion for a new trial for the convicted man, this motion can be filed at any time before the execution, and it is probable the attorneys will wait several weeks before their next move.

The law requires that not less than twenty nor more than sixty days shall expire between the day a defendant is re-sentenced and the date of his execution. It is probable, therefore, that the attorneys will be in no haste to make their move.

While certain facts on which a motion for a new trial can be based have already been developed, it is said the attorneys will wait in hopes that William J. Burns, the famous detective who is coming here to take up the case, can develop new facts which tend to ward the exoneration of the convicted man.

Burns is expected in four or five days, and as a result he will have at least a month in which to work on the case before the new date of the execution is reached.

Despite the denial by officials of his agency, it is known that William Pinkerton, head of all of the Pinkerton agencies in the country, was in Atlanta recently. That the presence here of this detective chief was occasioned by some phase of the Frank case is definitely known, but what the result of his way is going to be is a matter for conjecture.

REPUDIATES AFFIDAVIT.

Nina Formby, formerly of 400 Piedmont Avenue, has repudiated the affidavit she made to detectives who were working

the case against Leo Frank, according to dispatches from New York City.

Although her affidavit was not introduced in evidence at the trial, the woman takes occasion to repudiate it because, she says, it was responsible in a measure for the public sentiment against Frank.

According to the dispatches from New York she called up the metropolitan newspapers to make her statement. In it she asserts that City Detectives Chewning and Norris visited her house almost every night for three weeks before they got the affidavit. They brought whisky there, she asserts, and induced her to drink it, with the result that she was not mentally responsible at times.

Finally, by adroit questioning they induced her to say, it is alleged, that Frank was a degenerate; that he had often visited her house, and that on the night of the murder he phoned her and begged her to let him bring a girl there.

This was the substance of the woman's affidavit. She now asserts that she knew Frank only by sight, one of the factory girls having pointed out "the superintendent" to her.

Mrs. Formby, who left the city soon after the contents of her affidavit were published, in her statement to New York papers, brings in the names of three other detectives besides the two who secured her affidavit.

Bass Rosser, she says, met her once when she was here and told her in effect that she had been "handed a dirty deal" by the other two officers, and told her he was sorry for her.

Also, she says, Detectives Vickery and Hamby tried to induce her to take up residence in Atlanta again, and promised her their protection.
